

Hawaii Vaccines For Children Program  
Varicella Vaccine Storage – Physician Statement

Physician Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Clinic Name: \_\_\_\_\_

VFC Provider Identification Number (PIN): \_\_\_\_\_

VARIVAX contains live, attenuated varicella zoster virus, which is light and temperature sensitive.

**Routine Storage**

**Vaccine should be stored frozen** at an average temperature of -15°C (5°F) or colder. Store in original boxes with lids closed to protect from light.

**Any freezer (e.g. chest, frost-free) that reliably maintains an average temperature of -15°C (5°F) and has a separate, sealed freezer door is acceptable for storing VARIVAX.**

**Acceptable freezers include:**

- Household freezers designed to maintain temperatures at or below -15°C (5°F)
- Frost-free freezers
- Non-frost-free freezers
- Freezer-refrigerator combination units in which the freezer is **separated**, sealed and insulated.

**NON-acceptable freezers include:**

- Small “dormitory-type” freezers that have a hanging freezer compartment in the refrigerator section and are without a separate, sealed, and insulated freezer unit.
- Freezers that do not meet temperature-maintenance criteria

Freezer temperatures should be monitored and logged daily using an appropriate thermometer.

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Agreement with the Hawaii Vaccines For Children Program:

As a condition to receive varicella vaccine (VARIVAX) at no cost from the Hawaii Vaccines for Children Program, I agree to comply with the above mentioned Varicella Vaccine Storage Requirements. I will store the varicella vaccine in an acceptable freezer unit that maintains a temperature of -15°C (5°F) or colder. I will also store the vaccines in their original boxes with the lids closed in order to protect them from light.

Physician Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBMIT COMPLETED FORM TO:**  
State of Hawaii Department of Health  
Epidemiology Branch/Hawaii Immunization Program  
P.O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96801-9984  
Attn: VFC  
**OR**  
Fax to (808) 586-8302

## Addendum to the Provider Enrollment/Profile: Varicella Vaccine Storage Physician Statement

Varicella vaccine's storage requirements are very stringent.

- Varicella vaccine should be maintained in a continually frozen state at temperatures at or below (colder than) 5°F or –15°C.
- Note that **no freeze-thaw cycles are allowed with this vaccine**. Varicella vaccine must be used within 30 minutes of reconstitution or it should be discarded.

Storage of Varicella vaccine at temperatures higher than 5°F or –15°C will result in a loss of potency and a reduction in shelf life. If a power outage or equipment malfunction occurs that results in the vaccine storage temperatures rising above the recommended storage, the health care provider should contact Merck and Company, the vaccine manufacturer, at 1-800-9-827-4829 for a re-evaluation of the product's potency before using the vaccine.

Because of this strict temperature requirement, not all refrigerator/freezers are considered acceptable for varicella vaccine storage. Acceptable freezers include:

- Household freezers designed to maintain temperatures at or below 5°F or –15°C
- Frost-free freezers
- Non-frost-free freezers
- Freezer-refrigerator combination units in which the freezer is separated, sealed, and insulated.

NON-acceptable freezers include:

- Small, “dormitory-type” freezers that have a hanging freezer compartment in the refrigerator section and are without a separate, sealed, and insulated freezer unit.
- Freezers that do not meet temperature-maintenance criteria.

In addition to the above temperature requirements, varicella vaccines should be stored in their original boxes with lids closed. These vaccines are sensitive to light.

The Varicella Vaccine Storage Physician Statement is our assurance that you agree to protect the vaccine from light as well as meet the temperature maintenance criteria for proper Varicella vaccine storage.

**KEEP THIS COPY FOR PROVIDER'S RECORDS**